Amendments to the Claims:

Please amend claims 1,2, 4-10, 20-30, 32, 34-37, 39-44, 46, 48-51, 53-58, cancel claims 12-19, 33, 38, 47, and 52, all as shown below. All pending claims are reproduced below, including those that remain unchanged.

1   1. (Currently amended) A system to provide conversation states, comprising:
2   a first computing device capable of accepting a message ~~for~~ during a conversation
3   between the first computing device and a conversation partner;
4   a second computing device capable of:
5   maintaining ~~the~~ a state ~~for a~~ requested by the ~~conversation~~ message; and
6   storing information of the state in memory; and
7   a conversation manager capable of:
8   identifying the location of the second computing device which maintains
9   the state ~~for a~~ requested by the message ~~conversation~~; and
10   providing the location and/or the information of the state to the first
11   computing device.

1   2. (Currently amended) The system according to claim 1, wherein:
2   the first and second computing devices form a cluster.

1   3. (Original) The system according to claim 1, wherein:
2   the conversation manager is capable of maintaining the locations of all states in
3   the system.

1   4. (Currently amended) The system according to claim 1, wherein:
2   ~~a computing device is capable of maintaining its state~~ the information, ~~which~~ may
3   include, ~~but is not limited to,~~ a map of every state leased, owned, or stored on the second
4   computing device ~~it~~.

1   5. (Currently amended) The system according to claim 4~~1~~, wherein:

2

2   ~~a computing device is capable of maintaining its state information in memory~~ <u>the</u>

3   <u>first and second computing devices can be the same computing device</u>.

1   6. (Currently amended) The system according to claim ~~4~~<u>1</u>, wherein:

2   ~~a~~ <u>the second</u> computing device is capable of maintaining ~~its state~~ <u>the</u> information

3   both in-memory and on persistent storage.

1   7. (Currently amended) The system according to claim ~~4~~<u>1</u>, wherein:

2   <u>the conversation manager is capable of designating the second computing device</u>

3   <u>as the primary and replicating</u> the ~~state~~ information on ~~at least one primary~~ <u>the</u>

4   <u>second</u> computing device ~~can be replicated~~ to ~~one secondary~~ <u>a third</u> computing

5   device.

1   8. (Currently amended) The system according to claim 7, wherein:

2   the conversation manager is capable of routing to ~~the secondary~~ <u>the third</u>

3   computing device and setting it as the new primary when the <u>second</u> ~~primary~~

4   computing device fails.

1   9. (Currently amended) The system according to claim 1, wherein:

2   the conversation manager is capable of periodically determining the availability of

3   <u>the second and third</u> computing devices.

1   10. (Currently amended) A system to provide conversation for Web service, comprising:

2   a conversation partner capable of providing a message ~~for~~ <u>during</u> a conversation

3   <u>between the conversation partner and a first computing device</u>;

4   ~~a~~ <u>said</u> first computing device capable of accepting a message ~~for a~~ <u>during the</u>

5   conversation <u>with the conversation partner</u>;

6   a second computing device capable of<u>:</u>

7   maintaining ~~the~~ <u>a</u> state ~~for a~~ <u>requested by the</u> ~~conversation~~ <u>message</u>; and

8   <u>storing information of the state in memory; and</u>

9 a conversation manager capable of:

10 identifying the <u>location of the second</u> computing device which maintains

11 the state ~~for a~~ <u>requested by the message</u> ~~conversation;~~ <u>and</u>

12 <u>providing the location and/or the information of the state to the first</u>

13 <u>computing device</u>.

1 11. (Original) The system according to claim 10, wherein:

2 the message includes a conversation ID.

1 12. (Canceled).

1 13. (Canceled).

1 14. (Canceled).

1 15. (Canceled).

1 16. (Canceled).

1 17. (Canceled).

1 18. (Canceled).

1 19. (Canceled).

1 20. (Currently amended) The system according to claim 11, wherein:

2 ~~a~~ <u>the first</u> computing device is capable of contacting the conversation manager to

3 determine the location of ~~a~~ <u>the</u> state <u>requested by the message</u> using the

4 conversation ID.

4

1   21. (Currently amended) The system according to claim 10, wherein:

2   ~~a~~ the first computing device is capable of answering a request for ~~a~~ the state

3   directly without contacting the conversation manager if it owns such state.

1   22. (Currently amended) The system according to claim 10, wherein:

2   the conversation manager is capable of accepting a request for the location of ~~a~~

3   the state from ~~a~~ the first computing device.

1   23. (Currently amended) The system according to claim 11, wherein:

2   the conversation manager is capable of providing the location and/or the

3   information of ~~a~~ the state to ~~a~~ the first computing device requesting it based on the

4   conversation ID.

1   24. (Currently amended) The system according to claim 10, wherein:

2   ~~a~~ the first computing device is capable of accepting the location of ~~a~~ the state

3   from the conversation manager.

1   25. (Currently amended) The system according to claim 10, wherein:

2   ~~a~~ the first computing device is capable of invoking ~~a~~ the state on ~~a~~ the second

3   computing device in order to respond to ~~a~~ the conversation message received.

1   26. (Currently amended) The system according to claim 10, wherein:

2   the conversation manager is capable of sharing ~~a~~ the state with at least two

3   conversations.

1   27. (Currently amended) The system according to claim 10, wherein:

2   the conversation manager is capable of tracking a participating Web service that

3   initiates the conversation.

1   28. (Currently amended) The system according to claim 27, wherein:

5

2   the conversation manager is capable of sharing a the state with at least two Web

3   services and joining the sessions of these services.

1 29. (Currently amended) A method to provide a conversation for a Web service,

2 comprising:

3   maintaining a state on a computing device;

4   storing information of the state in memory on the computing device;

5   accepting a conversation message requesting the state during a conversation with

6   from a conversation partner;

7   contacting a conversation manager to determine the location of the state for a

8   requested by the conversation message;

9   accepting the location and/or the information of a the state from the conversation

10   manager; and

11   invoking a the state on a the computing device in order to respond to the

12   conversation message received.

1 30. (Currently amended) A method to provide a conversation for a Web service,

2 comprising:

3   maintaining a state on a computing device;

4   storing information of the state in memory on the computing device;

5   accepting a conversation message requesting the state during a conversation with

6   from a conversation partner; and

7   invoking a the state on a the computing device in order to respond to the

8   conversation message received directly at the computing device without

9   contacting the a conversation manager if the computing device owns such state.

1 31. (Original) The method according to claim 29, further comprising:

2   maintaining the locations of all states in the system on the conversation manager.

1 32. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 29, further comprising:

2   maintaining on ~~a~~ the computing device its state information, which may include,

3   ~~but is not limited to~~, a map of every state leased, owned, or stored on it.

1   33. (Canceled).

1   34. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 32, further comprising:

2   maintaining the state information on ~~a~~ the computing device both in-memory and

3   on persistent storage.

1   35. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 32, further comprising:

2   designating the computing device as the primary and replicating the state

3   information on ~~at least one primary~~ the computing device to ~~one secondary~~

4   another computing device.

1   36. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 35, further comprising:

2   routing to the ~~secondary~~ another computing device; and

3   setting it as the new primary when the current primary computing device fails.

1   37. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 29, further comprising:

2   determining the availability of the computing ~~devices~~ periodically.

1   38. (Canceled).

1   39. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 29, further comprising:

2   accepting request for the location of ~~a~~ the state from a computing device; and

3   providing the location of the state to the computing device requesting it.

1   40. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 29, further comprising:

2   sharing ~~a~~ the state ~~for~~ with at least two conversations.

1   41. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 29, further comprising:

2   tracking a participating Web service that initiates a ~~the~~ conversation.

1   42. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 41, further comprising:

2   sharing a the state with at least two Web services; and

3   joining the sessions of these services.

1   43. (Currently amended) A machine readable medium having instructions stored thereon

2   that when executed by a processor cause a system to:

3   maintain a state on a computing device;

4   store the information of the state in memory on the computing device;

5   accept a ~~conversation~~ message requesting the state during a conversation with

6   ~~from~~ a conversation partner;

7   contact a conversation manager to determine the location of the state ~~for a~~

8   requested by the ~~conversation~~ message;

9   accept the location and/or the information of a the state from the conversation

10   manager; and

11   invoke a the state on a the computing device in order to respond to the

12   conversation message ~~received~~.

1   44. (Currently amended) A machine readable medium having instructions stored thereon

2   that when executed by a processor cause a system to:

3   maintain a state on a computing device;

4   store information of the state in memory on the computing device;

5   accept a ~~conversation~~ message requesting the state during a conversation with

6   ~~from~~ a conversation partner; and

7   invoke a the state on a the computing device in order to respond to the

8   conversation message received directly at the computing device without

9   contacting ~~the~~ a conversation manager ~~if the computing device owns such state~~.

1   45. (Original)   The machine readable medium of claim 43, further comprising
2   instructions that when executed cause the system to:
3   maintain the locations of all states in the system on the conversation manager.

1   46. (Currently amended) The machine readable medium of claim 43, further comprising
2   instructions that when executed cause the system to:
3   maintain on a the computing device its state information, which may include, but
4   is not limited to, a map of every state leased, owned, or stored on it.

1   47. (Canceled).

1   48. (Currently amended) The machine readable medium of claim 46, further comprising
2   instructions that when executed cause the system to:
3   maintain the state information on a the computing device both in-memory and on
4   persistent storage.

1   49. (Currently amended) The machine readable medium of claim 48, further comprising
2   instructions that when executed cause the system to:
3   designating the computing device as the primary and replicating the state
4   information on at least one primary the computing device to one secondary
5   another computing device.

1   50. (Currently amended) The machine readable medium of claim 49, further comprising
2   instructions that when executed cause the system to:
3   route to the secondary another computing device; and
4   set it as the new primary when the current primary computing device fails.

1   51. (Currently amended) The machine readable medium of claim 43, further comprising
2   instructions that when executed cause the system to:
3   check for the availability of the computing devices periodically.

1   52. (Canceled).

1   53. (Currently amended) The machine readable medium of claim 43, further comprising
2   instructions that when executed cause the system to:
3   accept request for the location of a the state from a computing device; and
4   provide the location of the state to the computing device requesting it.

1   54. (Currently amended) The machine readable medium of claim 43, further comprising
2   instructions that when executed cause the system to:
3   share a the state for with at least two conversations.

1   55. (Currently amended) The machine readable medium of claim 43, further comprising
2   instructions that when executed cause the system to:
3   track a participating Web service that initiates a the conversation.

1   56. (Currently amended) The machine readable medium of claim 55, further comprising
2   instructions that when executed cause the system to:
3   share a the state with at least two Web services; and
4   join the sessions of these services.

1   57. (Currently amended) A system for handling conversation, comprising:
2   means for maintaining a state on a computing device;
3   means for storing information of the state in memory on the computing device;
4   means for accepting a conversation message requesting the state during a
5   conversation with from a conversation partner;
6   means for contacting a conversation manager to determine the location of the state
7   for a requested by the conversation message;
8   means for accepting the location and/or the information of a the state from the
9   conversation manager; and
10   means for invoking a the state on a the computing device in order to respond to
11   the conversation message received.

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1   58. (Currently amended) A computer data signal embodied in a transmission medium,

2   comprising:

3   a code segment including instructions to maintain a state on a computing device;

4   a code segment including instructions to store information of the state in memory

5   on the computing device;

6   a code segment including instructions to accept a ~~conversation~~ message

7   requesting the state during a conversation with ~~from~~ a conversation partner;

8   a code segment including instructions to contact a conversation manager to

9   determine the location of the state ~~for a~~ requested by the ~~conversation~~ message;

10   a code segment including instructions to accept the location and/or the

11   information of ~~a~~ the state from the conversation manager; and

12   a code segment including instructions to invoke ~~a~~ the state on ~~a~~ the computing

13   device in order to respond to the conversation message ~~received~~.